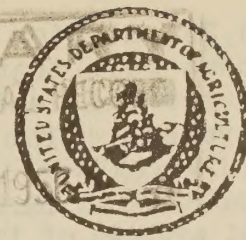


Farm Report

Cooperative Crop Reporting Service



No. 206

RALEIGH, N. C.

APRIL 23, 1956

RECORD MILK PRODUCTION FOR MARCH

Production of milk on North Carolina farms during March totaled 137 million pounds, the highest March output on record. This is 2 million pounds above the production for March of last year, the previous high, and 14 percent above the 1945-54 10-year March average. On April 1, pasture conditions averaged 11 percentage points higher than on April 1, 1955. Grains fed per milk cow which includes millfeeds and other concentrates averaged about the same as a year earlier. Milk production for the month was seasonally high, exceeding the February output by 12 million pounds.

Production of milk during March for the United States amounted to 11,024 million pounds -- 5 percent above March 1955 and 13 percent above the 1945-54 average for the month. Milk production was at the rate of 2.14 pounds per capita per day, 4 percent above the rate of March a year ago and 2 percent above the 10-year average.

MARCH EGG PRODUCTION ABOVE LAST YEAR

Egg production in North Carolina during March is estimated at 161 million. This was about 10 percent above production during the same month a year earlier and about 18 percent above production during February of this year. It is estimated that production for the first three months of 1956 has totaled 428 million eggs 13 percent above production for the corresponding period of 1955.

The number of layers on hand at 8,967,000 and rate of lay at 17.9 eggs for the month were both above the previous year.

For the U. S. farm flocks laid

(Continued on Page 2)

FARM OPERATIONS SHOW PROGRESS

Soil moisture conditions as of the week ending April 7 were generally satisfactory, although localized sections in the Piedmont, Mountains and North-eastern Coastal Plains reported soils to be a little too wet for proper cultivation. Frequent rains beginning in February retarded land preparation, but they have been very beneficial in building up moisture reserves and in promoting the growth of small grains and pastures. Periods of cold weather occurred throughout the past month and extended on into April, but with more favorable conditions prevailing during the last of March and the first week in April, the preparation of land for spring planting was reported almost on schedule. No serious damage, such as that occurring in March a year ago, has resulted from frosts and heavy freezes.

Tobacco plant beds are in fair to good condition, but plants are unusually small for the time of year and it is reported that transplanting will be fully two weeks behind schedule. Some plants have been set in fields of the border belt, but the operation is not extensive.

Corn planting was under way in many sections of the state by the end of the first week in April by which time it was progressing rapidly in many counties of the southeast. Only a very small amount of cotton had been planted by April 7, and most of that was confined to the southernmost producing counties near the coast.

Winter grains and pasture grasses were greatly retarded by continued cold spells during early spring. Improved moisture conditions, however, have been very favorable for the production of these crops and have helped to offset

(Continued on Page 2)

EGG PRODUCTION (Continued)

5,770 million eggs in March -- 1 percent more than in March last year but 7 percent less than the 1945-54 March average. The rate of egg production in March was 18.3 eggs per layer, compared with 18.0 last year and the 1949-54 average of 17.4 eggs.

FARM OPERATIONS (Continued)

much of the damage arising from intermittent freezes. On the whole, small grains and pastures are now in good condition and they are expected to show further improvement with the continuation of normal weather.

A fairly good crop of peaches is now in prospect. Some damage resulted from late March freezes, particularly to orchards in low lying places. On the other hand, some producers, especially in the large commercial areas, state that the injury would amount to no more than a liberal thinning.

U. S. ELECTRICITY

CONSUMPTION ON FARMS

A continued increase in the use of electricity on farms has resulted in a record high average monthly electric bill and a record low average cost per kilowatt hour paid by farmers, according to an annual survey made by the Crop Reporting Board. This survey, which included reports from over 22,000 farmers throughout the United States, indicated that the increase in electricity consumption was general throughout all Regions and States.

The average cost per 100 kwh to farmers in July 1955 was \$2.61 compared with \$2.65 a year earlier, \$2.77 in 1953, and \$3.03 for the July 1947-52 average. The decline from 1954 to 1955 was the smallest in several years. This was owing in large part to the fact that many farms were already using quantities of electric energy which reach into the cheapest block of the rate schedules. Further increases in usage by these consumers are at constant rates per kilowatt hour. Increases in retail rates charged by some suppliers may also have been partly responsible for the relatively small decline in the 1955 average price paid per kilowatt hour. Meanwhile, the

COMMERCIAL VEGETABLE REPORT

CABBAGE, LATE SPRING (East): North Carolina cabbage growers indicate they planted 2,300 acres for late spring harvest -- 10 percent above last year's harvested acreage and about 6 percent above average. Reports indicate that the crop was transplanted under very wet soil conditions and has been retarded some by recurring periods of cold weather. For the United States the preliminary estimate of late spring acreage is 10,030 acres -- 9 percent below average.

STRAWBERRIES: Late freezes during the latter half of March damaged the strawberry crop in North Carolina rather severely and the present condition of the crop is only fair. Most of the early buds, blooms and small fruit present were killed and as a result, the crop has been retarded about two weeks. Present prospects indicate a crop of 98,000 24-quart crates. This would be more than twice the size of last year's crop but 78 percent below average. Strawberry production for fresh market and processing in the 13 mid-spring states is forecast at a record high 9,932,000 crates, nearly two-thirds more than produced in these states in 1955 and close to double average production.

LETTUCE: On April 1, the North Carolina lettuce crop was generally in fair to good condition but there was a wide range in growth progress. The more mature fields have been hurt some by low temperatures, but the principal effect will be delayed maturity. If present prospects continue, a crop of 234,000 L. A. crates is expected for 1956.

BEETS: Low temperatures during late March thinned beet stands considerably in some sections and reduced yield prospects somewhat. As of April 1 a crop of 63,000 bushels is forecast, the same as for last year.

average monthly electric bill paid by farmers continued to increase and the U. S. average at \$10.00 for July 1955 was 55 cents above a year earlier and over \$3.00 above the 1947-52 average.

BROILER CHICKS HATCHED BY COMMERCIAL HATCHERIES SELECTED STATES

STATE	U. S. Rank Jan.-Mar. 1956	DURING MARCH		JANUARY THROUGH MARCH	
		1955 <u>1/</u>	1956 <u>2/</u>	1955 <u>1/</u>	1956 <u>2/</u>
		THOUSANDS			
Ga....	1	16,025	19,145	43,223	52,109
N. C..	2	7,301	9,312	18,890	24,562
Texas.	3	6,145	7,597	17,180	21,860
Ark...	4	6,554	7,679	16,729	21,192
Va....	5	5,684	7,380	16,009	19,314
Md....	6	6,118	6,860	17,573	18,578
Calif.	7	5,354	5,834	13,541	16,369
Del....	8	5,155	6,392	14,043	16,060
Mo....	9	4,893	6,082	11,331	16,025
Ind...	10	4,533	5,648	11,950	15,795
U. S..	-	105,422	129,859	278,723	351,207

1/ Revised.

2/ Preliminary.

N. C. 1956 BROILER HATCH SECOND HIGHEST IN NATION

Chicks hatched by commercial hatcheries in North Carolina during January through March of 1956 made up the second highest production in the Nation, being exceeded only by Georgia. The three-month State output amounted to 24,562,000 chicks which was 30 percent above the 18,890,000 produced during the same period a year ago. This was a record first quarter output for North Carolina and it is indicative of the rapid growth of the broiler industry in this State. March hatchings, also a record for the State and the second highest in the U. S., totaled 9,312,000 chicks or a 27.5 percent increase over the March hatch of 1955. Relative hatching in the past, however, have not been so large in North Carolina during the latter part of the year as they have for the first part.

For the United States commercial hatcheries produced 283,701,000 chicks during March. This was 12 percent above the output of chicks in March last year but about average for the month.

Broiler chicks accounted for 46 percent of the total chicks produced in March compared with 41 percent in March last year. Broiler chick production which was the largest of record for the month totaled 129,859,000 chicks 23 percent more than in March last year. The demand for broiler chicks remains steady and a relatively large hatch of broiler chicks during April is in prospect as the number of broiler chicks eggs in incubators on April 1 was 25 percent more than a year earlier.

(See table above)

FARM WAGE RATES UP

Wage rates paid by North Carolina farmers as of April 1, 1956, were appreciably higher than they were a year earlier. The average rate per day with house at \$4.50 was up 25 cents, and the rate per day without board or room at \$5.30 was up 30 cents. These increases amounted to about six percent. Over the same period average hourly rates rose four cents above the 50 cents paid with house and six cents above the 59 cents paid without board or room on April 1, 1955.

FARM WAGE RATES, N. C. AND SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

AREA AND CLASSIFICATION	April 1 1955	April 1 1956
<u>NORTH CAROLINA</u>		<u>DOLLARS</u>
Per Day:		
With House.....	4.25	4.50
Without Board or Room.	5.00	5.30
Per Hour:		
With House.....	.50	.54
Without Board or Room.	.59	.65
<u>SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES</u>		
Per Day:		
With House.....	4.25	4.40
Without Board or Room.	4.95	5.10
Per Hour:		
With House.....	.56	.57
Without Board or Room.	.65	.68

LARGER N. C. WHEAT CROP IN PROSPECT

North Carolina 1956 wheat production is forecast at 8,624,000 bushels. Such an output would be the highest since 1951 and 1,452,000 bushels, or 20 percent above the 7,172,000 bushels produced in 1955. This year's planted acreage for all purposes is indicated at 392,000 compared with 366,000 a year earlier. The April 1 condition of the

crop was mostly good or better, whereas, a month earlier reports of fair and good predominated.

Total United States winter wheat condition on April 1 indicated a crop of 716 million bushels. This would be 2 percent larger than the 1955 crop of 705 million bushels but 18 percent less than average.

GRAIN STOCKS ON FARMS APRIL 1

CORN

Stocks of corn on North Carolina farms April 1, 1956 was estimated at 26,144,000 bushels compared with 17,098,000 bushels a year ago and 26,708,000 for the 1945-54 ten-year average.

United States: A total of 1,477 million bushels of corn was stored on farms April 1. This was 4 percent more than a year earlier and 13 percent above average.

WHEAT

Stocks of wheat on Tarheel farms are estimated at 789,000 bushels compared with 1,204,000 a year ago and 1,100,000 for the 10-year 1945-54 average.

United States: Wheat stocks on farms -- 219 million bushels on April 1, were 3 percent larger than a year earlier but 3 percent below average and 16 percent less than the record holdings on April 1, 1954.

OATS

April 1, 1956 stocks of oats on N. C. farms are estimated at 3,326,000

bushels compared with 3,671,000 bushels a year earlier and 2,080,000 for the 10-year average.

United States: Stocks of oats stored on farms are estimated at 588 million bushels, the largest April 1 holdings of record. They are 7 percent larger than a year ago and 20 percent larger than the 10-year average. Current stocks include oats under CCC loans, purchase agreement and resealed.

SOYBEANS

Stocks of soybeans on farms in North Carolina are estimated to be 1,063,000 bushels compared with 614,000 a year ago and 810,000 for the 1945-54 average. This crop is becoming of increasing importance in the State and a large part of the stocks on hand will be used for seeding the increased acreage intended for 1956.

United States: Soybean stocks on farms April 1 totaled 60 million bushels. These are the third highest April 1 stocks of record but are little more than one-half the record stocks on farms a year ago. The 10-year average is 42 million bushels. (See following table)

GRAIN STOCKS ON FARMS APRIL 1

CROP	NORTH CAROLINA			UNITED STATES		
	Average 1945-54	1955	1956	Average 1945-54	1955	1956
-- THOUSAND BUSHELS --						
Corn	26,708	17,098	26,144	1,302,876	1,425,743	1,476,965
Wheat	1,100	1,204	789	224,708	211,592	218,850
Oats	2,080	3,671	3,326	491,266	551,570	588,277
Barley	201	368	248	77,021	116,721	115,784
Rye	28	27	33	3,850	8,021	11,245
Soybeans	810	614	1,063	42,153	113,914	59,982

CIGARETTE CONSUMPTION

Since by far the greater part of tobacco produced in North Carolina is consumed in cigarettes, the following excerpts from the March, 1956, issue of "The Tobacco Situation", released by the Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, is submitted as a matter of local interest.

After declining from the 1952 peak in 1953 and 1954, the number of cigarettes manufactured rose in 1955 and is expected to make a further gradual gain in 1956. Last year's output at 412 1/2 billion was 2 2/3 percent above 1954. Consumption in this country as indicated by tax-paid removals increased over 3 1/2 percent but tax-free removals (mostly for overseas use) fell off 8 1/2 percent from 1954 to 1955. The return from abroad of a sizable number of troops resulted in smaller overseas shipments of tax-free cigarettes and contributed to the increase of those sold in the tax-paid category. Trade reports indicated the sales of filter tips in this country were continuing to gain at the close of 1955.

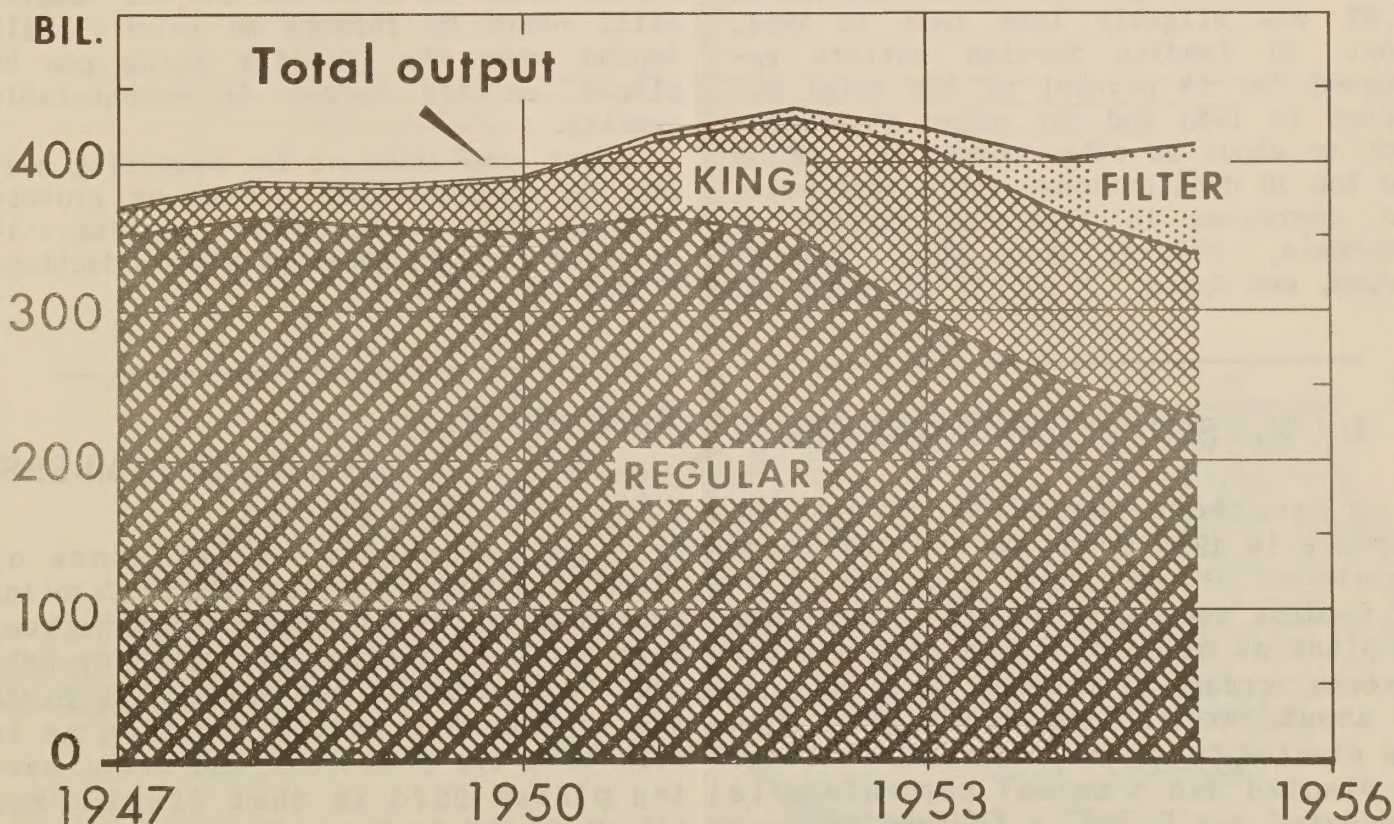
Cigarette consumption per person 15

years and over in 1955 totaled an estimated 9.83 pounds per person -- 1 percent above 1954 and 6 percent below the 1953 peak. Measured by number, the peak consumption year was 1952. Measured by pounds, the peak was 1953 when proportion of king size cigarettes was larger than in 1952.

The number of regular size, nonfilter cigarettes has declined considerably since 1952. The output of king size, nonfilter cigarettes more than quadrupled from 1949 to 1953 but changed relatively little since then. However, the output of filter tip cigarettes rose sharply in recent years. Based on trade sources, it is estimated that the proportion of regular cigarettes dropped from about 81 to 55 percent of the total from 1952 to 1955. On the other hand, the proportion of king size, nonfilter cigarettes increased from nearly 18 percent in 1952 to around 27 percent in 1953 and accounted for roughly the same share in 1954 and 1955. The proportion of filter tips jumped from 1 1/3 percent in 1952 to about

(Continued on Page 6)

CIGARETTE OUTPUT



ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION BY KIND OF CIGARETTE BASED ON SELECTED DATA FROM TRADE PUBLICATIONS

CIGARETTE CONSUMPTION (Continued)

18 percent in 1955.

The increases in cigarette consumption appear to be rather widespread. Tax data for about three-fourths of the States levying cigarette taxes indicate larger consumption in the last half of 1955 than in the corresponding period of a year earlier. The high level of disposable income last year was a favorable factor and is expected to continue so in 1956. It is estimated that on the average consumers paid about 3 percent more per pack of cigarettes in 1955 than in 1954. Prices in 11 States increased due to higher taxes levied by those States during 1955. Further, smokers who bought king size cigarettes generally paid more per pack following the advance in manufactures' prices for this category last April. Also the sizable shift to filter tip cigarettes, which are higher priced than regular or king size, nonfilter tips cigarettes, was a factor in raising the per unit price paid for cigarettes in 1955.

From 45 to 50 million pounds (farm-sales weight) of tobacco is exported annually in the form of cigarettes. The number shipped in 1955 totaled about 15.1 billion -- 2 percent less than in 1954 and the least since 1950. The declared value of cigarette exports in 1955 was 55 1/2 million dollars -- 3 percent below 1954. The average value per thousand of \$3.67 was slightly less than in 1954. About 10 leading foreign outlets accounted for 55 percent of the total exported in 1955 and the other 45 percent went to about 90 other countries. Among the top 10 destinations, there were notable increases in cigarette exports to Venezuela, France, Hong Kong, Spanish Africa, and Spain.

U. S. SUPPLY OF SOYBEANS

Prospects for a record soybean acreage in 1956 point to another large supply of oilseed meal for the 1956-57 feeding season. Farmers' intentions to plant as of March 1 indicate a total soybean acreage of around 21.8 million, or about two million acres more than was planted last year. If this acreage is planted and a normal percentage is harvested for beans, a 1950-54 average yield would produce a crop of about 410 million bushels, around 40 million above the record 1955 crop.

SWEET POTATO STOCKS REPORT

A total of 816,000 bushels of sweet potatoes was stored in North Carolina on March 1, according to indications from a special survey of growers and commercial storage houses conducted by the North Carolina Crop Reporting Service at the end of February. A similar survey conducted one month earlier indicated that there were 1,113,000 bushels in storage on February 1. Thus, disappearance during February of sweet potatoes stored in all positions is calculated at 297,000 bushels.

Of the 816,000 bushels in storage on March 1, growers indicated that 252,000 bushels were stored on farms for future sale. The remainder of 564,000 bushels were in commercial storage houses. On February 1 there were 492,000 bushels stored on farms for sale and 621,000 bushels in commercial storage. Stocks in commercial storage include some quantities still owned by farmers.

Total stocks owned by farmers for sale on March 1, both in farm storage and in off-farm storage, is estimated at 369,000 bushels -- 205,000 bushels less than they owned a month earlier. The quantity actually sold by farmers during February is somewhat uncertain since some of the disappearance in holdings undoubtedly resulted from spoilage. For the same reason total sales of the 369,000 bushels still owned by farmers on March 1 will depend upon the quantity which can be placed on the market in merchantable quality.

After completion of the marketing season, a comprehensive survey of growers will be made to determine complete utilization of 1955 sweet potato production.

RANK OF N. C.

LIVESTOCK NUMBERS

As to numbers of livestock on farms on January 1, 1956, North Carolina ranked 35th for all cattle and calves, 35th for beef cattle, and 33rd for beef cows two years old and over. The State was in somewhat better position as to milk cows two years old and over, having placed 23rd in that field. For all sheep and lambs on farms, January 1, it was in 36th position. The State's best showing was made in pigs saved during 1955 in which it ranked 11th.

WEATHER SUMMARY FOR MARCH, 1956

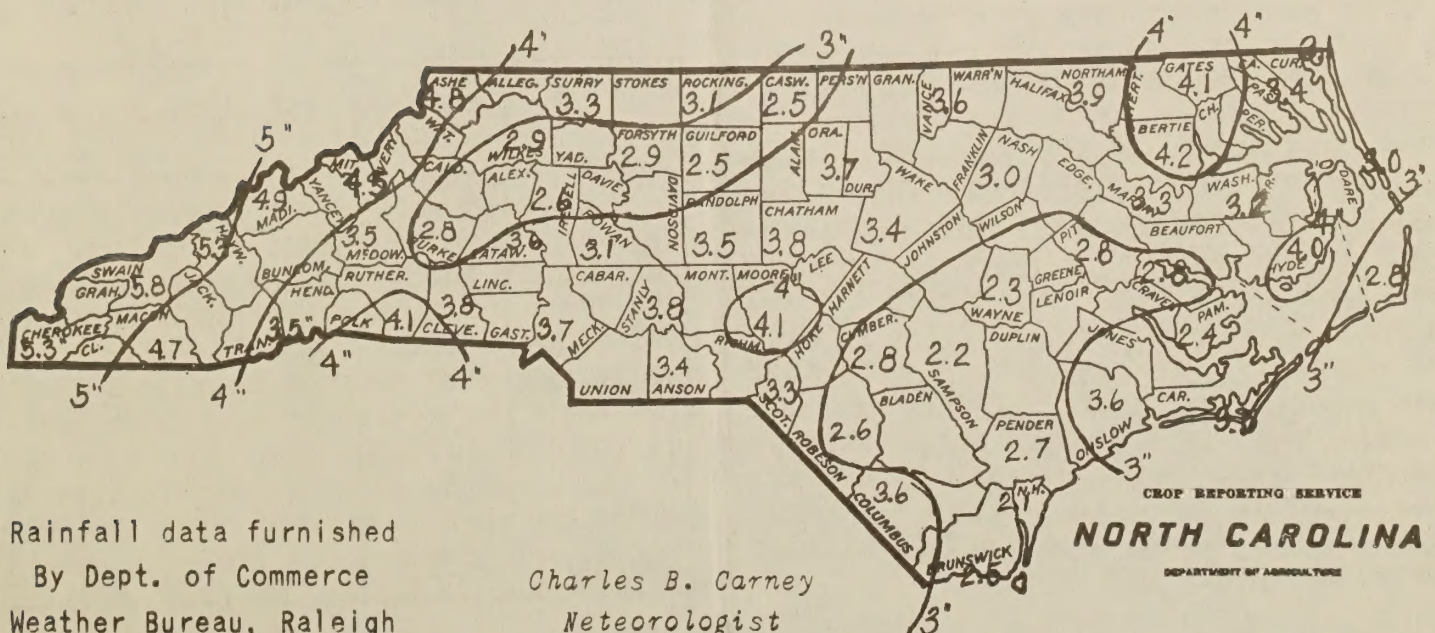
March was a month of frequent minor weather changes. North Carolina weather was affected during the month by no less than ten high pressure areas and twelve low pressure storms, with ten associated weather fronts passing through at least a portion of the state. Average cloud cover at reporting stations was a little over half, but sunshine was recorded during about two-thirds of the daylight hours. March was a windy month in North Carolina, but there were only a few cases of destructive winds. Outstanding among these was Sunday, March 18, when widespread minor destruction occurred over the State, and a few small tornadoes were known to have struck in isolated areas.

Most of the warm weather that occurred during March in North Carolina came in the first half of the month, while most of the unseasonably cold weather occurred during the last half. Temperatures climbed to eighty degrees or higher in the piedmont on the afternoons of the 6th and 7th. In some localities, the warmest weather of record for so early in the season occurred on one of these dates. There was generally cold weather during the period from the 16th through the 25th,

but nothing approaching record low temperatures occurred. Outside the higher mountain elevations, few places in North Carolina recorded any temperature below 20 degrees during March. At most stations in the State, the average temperature for the month was within a degree of the normal.

March rains came frequently, but generally in small quantity. Most stations in North Carolina had measurable rain on ten or twelve different days, and sprinkles on a few others. The heaviest rains of the month occurred on the 15th and 16th; most sections of the State had a total of an inch or more on one of these dates. There were very few other cases of as much as an inch of rain occurring in a single day. The longest rainy period occurred around the middle of the month; daily rains occurred over practically all of North Carolina from the 13th through the 16th. On other occasions, rain periods were mostly confined to one or two days, with breaks of one to four days between. The total March rain at most stations was near or a little less than normal. Snowfall was negligible except in the mountains.

INCHES OF RAINFALL MARCH, 1956



FARM REPORT

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PEACH CROP SHORT OF AVERAGE

As of April 1 North Carolina orchard-ists reported the condition of peaches at 57 percent of normal. This is in contrast to the 1945-54 ten-year average April 1 condition of 78 percent. Current reports, however, are on a statewide basis and conditions in the commercial areas of the sandhills are thought to be some better. Peaches undoubtedly suffered some damage from late March freezes, but most producers state that the seriousness of the injury cannot be fully determined until blooms have shed and surviving peaches have set. Most growers are expecting a pretty fair crop.

For the ten southern states surveyed at this time, the April 1 condition was reported at 53 percent of a full crop as compared with the ten-year average of 71 percent.

APRIL 1 CONDITION OF PEACHES

STATE	Average 1945-54	1953	1954	1955	1956
<i>PERCENT</i>					
N. C.....	78	87	73	2	57
S. C.....	74	75	71	1	50
Ga.....	74	85	79	1	42
Fla.....	64	85	50	15	65
Ala.....	67	82	72	1	50
Miss.....	64	79	40	4	53
Ark.....	69	87	41	2	79
La.....	68	79	42	5	48
Okla.....	58	79	25	3	64
Texas....	59	65	18	4	43
10 States	71	80	61	2	53